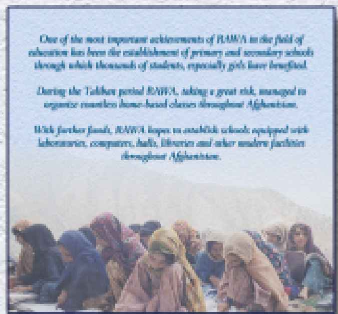
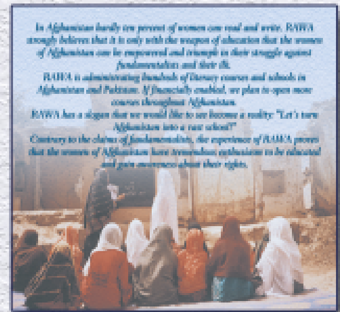
RAWA
THE VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

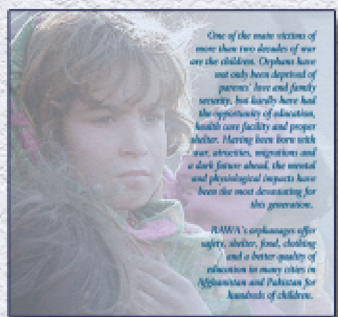






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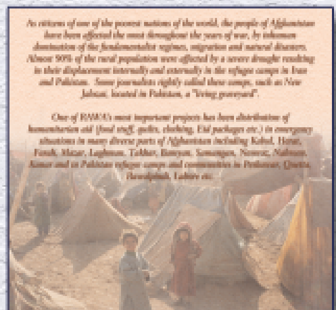


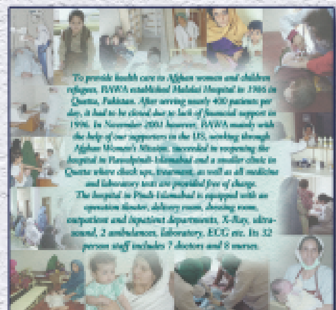


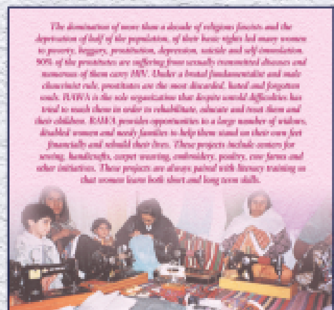
This booklet aims to let our valued donors know where their help goes and make them aware of the wide-ranging activities of RAWA.

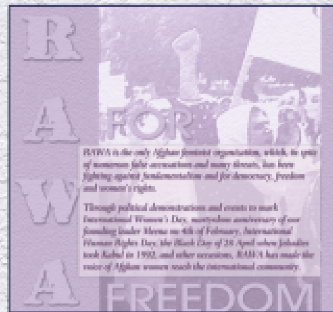
We will be delighted if this booklet is also taken as an expression of thanks from the bottom of our hearts to all RAWA supporters throughout the world.

We are deeply proud to receive contributions from our supporters in North America, Europe, Australia and around the world. This has enabled RAWA to carry out its humanitarian activities in a wider and more effective manner than many "non-political" Afghan NGOs financed largely by the various international aid agencies.









Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan
RAWA
جمعیت انقلابی زنان افغانستان
1977

Founded in 1977, The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) is the oldest Afghan, independent women's humanitarian and political organization working in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

RAWA's objectives has always been to involve an increasing number of Afghan women in humanitarian and political activities aimed at acquiring women's human rights and contributing to the struggle for the establishment of a democratic and secular government. Despite the suffocating political atmosphere that has been an unfortunate constant in Afghanistan since RAWA's founding, RAWA very soon became involved in widespread activities in different socio-political arenas including education, health and income generation as well as political agitation against fundamentalists and for democracy.

RAWA, as the voice of the long silenced women of Afghanistan, inspired by the blood of its martyred leader Meena, will march forward at the vanguard of our country's legion of women to create a free, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan.

Because RAWA has always had its political stand as well as its humanitarian work, it has received scarce help from agencies related to the UN or other governments. Still with a clear democratic and anti-fundamentalist stand, it has been trusted by thousands of individuals and numerous freedom-loving and independent women's organizations around the world through which their donations could honestly and wholeheartedly reach the most deserving people.



Meena (1956-1987)

In Afghanistan hardly ten percent of women can read and write. RAWA strongly believes that it is only with the weapon of education that the women of Afghanistan can be empowered and triumph in their struggle against fundamentalists and their ilk.

RAWA is administrating hundreds of literacy courses and schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan. If financially enabled, we plan to open more courses throughout Afghanistan.

RAWA has a slogan that we would like to see become a reality: "Let's turn Afghanistan into a vast school!"

Contrary to the claims of fundamentalists, the experience of RAWA proves that the women of Afghanistan have tremendous enthusiasm to be educated and gain awareness about their rights.





Refugee Camp



An aged woman from the Hazara minority in Yakowlang district of Bamyan province told RAWA, “I am very happy to learn reading and writing at my old age. I have suffered too much, my son was killed, we were insulted by Khalili and Taliban. I come here to this course to forget my pain at least for a short time. Otherwise we only cry for our loved ones. We receive pencil, notebook etc. from the course.”



Parwan



Rawalpindi

Education



Peshawar



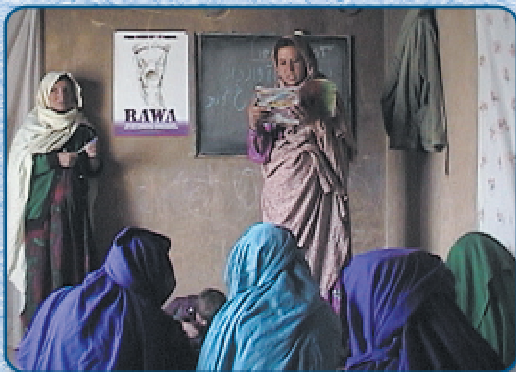
Herat



Nimroze



Peshawar



Bamyan



Jalalabad



Peshawar



Kunduz



Takhar



Herat



Badakhshan



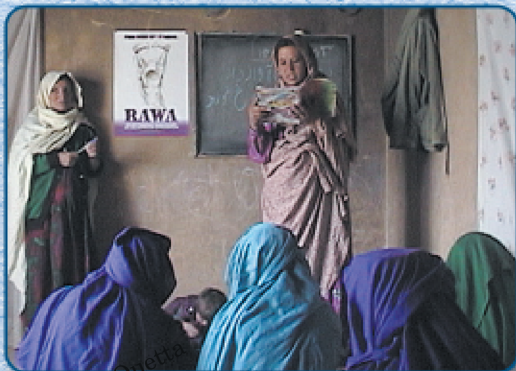






Farah

Bamyan



Quetta



Kabul



Laghman



Lahore



Kabul



Kabul



Refugee Camp



Kunduz



Farah



Mazar



Nimroze

One of the most important achievements of RAWA in the field of education has been the establishment of primary and secondary schools through which thousands of students, especially girls have benefited.

During the Taliban period RAWA, taking a great risk, managed to organize countless home-based classes throughout Afghanistan.

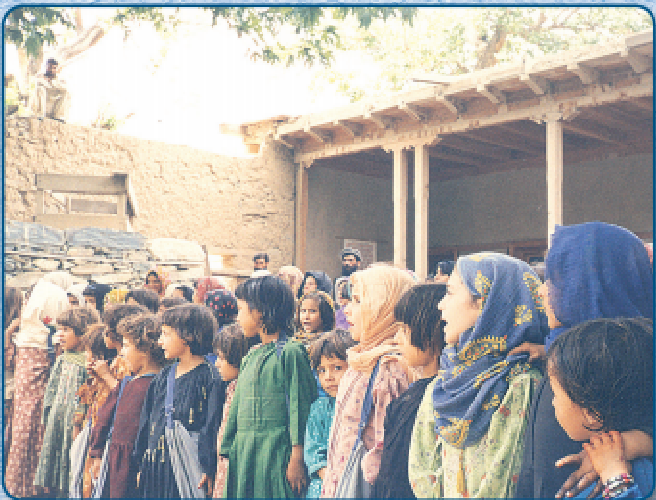
With further funds, RAWA hopes to establish schools equipped with laboratories, computers, halls, libraries and other modern facilities throughout Afghanistan.



In Afghanistan:

















In Pakistan:











All RAWA schools in Islamabad-Rawalpindi participated in a joint entertainment program, June 4, 2002.



A group of RAWA students in traditional Afghan clothes singing patriotic songs on June 4, 2002.



RAWA often organizes functions, competitions and entertainment programs for students and distributes prizes to reward student excellence.



Some RAWA supporters and members in a function in the RAWA's Hewad No.6 school in Islamabad.

























The library in RAWA's Zarghona High School in Peshawar.











RAWA regularly organizes seminars for teachers in its schools to discuss the latest methods of teaching in war conflict situations.





In cooperation with other institutions and sports clubs, RAWA organizes a New Year Sports Festival every year that are attended by thousands of refugees and athletes.



One of the main victims of more than two decades of war are the children. Orphans have not only been deprived of parents' love and family security, but hardly have had the opportunity of education, health care facility and proper shelter. Having been born with war, atrocities, migrations and a dark future ahead, the mental and physiological impacts have been the most devastating for this generation.

RAWA's orphanages offer safety, shelter, food, clothing and a better quality of education in many cities in Afghanistan and Pakistan for hundreds of children.







Dec. 2001, Paulina Almeida a Portuguese theatre actress and stilt walker during a performance in a RAWA school in Islamabad. She visited RAWA in Pakistan to teach theatre skills to Afghan boys and girls in RAWA schools and orphanages.





The adult caretakers of the orphanages take care of the children with parental love and attention



Children at the dining table













Children are taught that a neat and disciplined life can be a healthy one.





A supporter of RAWA suggested celebrating children's birthdays in our orphanages; since then it has become common in all the orphanages.





Studies and entertainment go hand in hand in children's daily timetable.





Carol Mark a Canadian supporter of RAWA (right) and a delegation from the Italian Embassy in Pakistan (left) visiting the orphanages





Carol Mann, a French supporter of RAWA (right) and Dr Anne Brodsky an American supporter (left) in RAWA orphanages





International Children's Day celebrated by RAWA orphanages. (2002)



Children are encouraged to organize events of poetry, singing songs, plays and educational quiz games.

As citizens of one of the poorest nations of the world, the people of Afghanistan have been affected the most throughout the years of war, by inhuman domination of the fundamentalist regimes, migration and natural disasters. Almost 90% of the rural population were affected by a severe drought resulting in their displacement internally and externally in the refugee camps in Iran and Pakistan. Some journalists rightly called these camps, such as New Jalozai, located in Pakistan, a "living graveyard".

One of RAWA's most important projects has been distribution of humanitarian aid (food stuff, quilts, clothing, Eid packages etc.) in emergency situations in many diverse parts of Afghanistan including Kabul, Herat, Farah, Mazar, Laghman, Takhar, Bamyan, Samangan, Nemroz, Nahreen, Kunar and in Pakistan refugee camps and communities in Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi, Lahore etc.



Herat











amangan

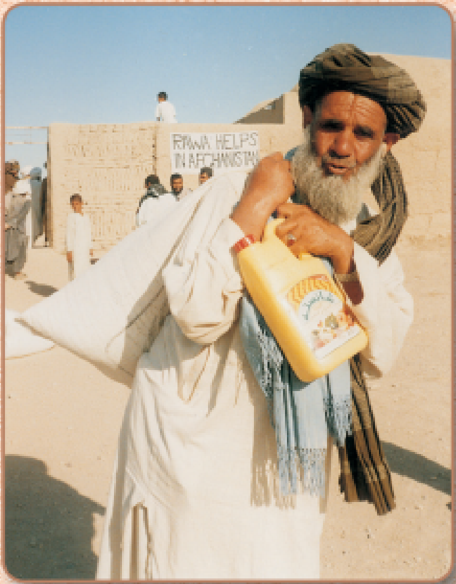








Nimroze











Kabul









Another worth mentioning effort by RAWA was providing uniforms, footwear, stationary and arranging an Eid party for the 1500 orphan girls and boys in the biggest state run orphanage in Kabul.










RAWA







Farah









Nahreen









Rawalpindi








RAWA AID DONATION CENTER
مرکز توزیع مواد امدادی
جمعیت انقلابی زنان افغانستان




RAWA
RAWA
RAWA
RAWA




RAWA

Jalozai Refugee Camp





















Akora Khattak Refugee Camp















An Afghan widow tearfully describes her sorrowful stories to a RAWA activist. She lives with her 5 children in a refugee camp and has turned to beggary in order to feed them. One of her sons is disabled. They were forced to immigrate to Pakistan due to heavy fighting in Charikar district of Parwan province in northern Afghanistan. She says that the aid, which RAWA is handing out, is the first they have received since coming to Pakistan a month ago.



Hareepur









Peshawar









Quetta













To provide health care to Afghan women and children refugees, RAWA established Malalai Hospital in 1986 in Quetta, Pakistan. After serving nearly 400 patients per day, it had to be closed due to lack of financial support in 1996. In November 2001 however, RAWA mainly with the help of our supporters in the US, working through Afghan Women's Mission, succeeded in reopening the hospital in Rawalpindi-Islamabad and a smaller clinic in Quetta where check ups, treatment, as well as all medicine and laboratory tests are provided free of charge.

The hospital in Pindi-Islamabad is equipped with an operation theater, delivery room, dressing room, outpatient and inpatient departments, X-Ray, ultra-sound, 2 ambulances, laboratory, ECG etc. Its 32 person staff includes 7 doctors and 8 nurses.













Malalai Hospital in Rawalpindi-Islamabad attends approximately 250 patients each day. And there is an increase in the number every month.





The patients are taught health education and family planning every day.





Emergency section, wound dressing room and staff on duty are available 24 hours.









Malalai Hospital in Rawalpindi-Islamabad has the capacity of admitting 25 patients.



The Operation Theatre, delivery room, X-Ray and laboratory, all provide free of charge service to the patients.









If the medicine prescribed to the patients are not available in the hospital's pharmacy, it is immediately purchased from the market.



Though the hospital was operative for a few months already, on May 28, 2002 Mr. Steve Penners, President of the AWM, officially inaugurated the hospital. Dr Leo Lagassse, another American supporter of RAWA was also present at the ceremony.



A group photo of the Malalai Hospital staff, Pindi-Islamabad







A group of Italian supporters (top) and a delegation from Basque Government (bottom) are visiting Malalai Hospital.



The hospital's administrator tries to solve patients' problems as quickly as possible.

If necessary, both hospitals make patient referrals to doctors, laboratories, and better-equipped hospitals and advocate for their free or reduced cost care.



Instead of complaints in the box, we get these messages:

- "I have lived with my husband and six kids in Quetta as well as Peshawar and have visited almost every special hospital for refugees but unfortunately in none of them have I found free medicine and tests and a civilized atmosphere. However I found this in Malalai Hospital…." Zeoarrie.
- "My family has delayed repatriation to Afghanistan till the time when my mother and time when my mother and two brother's health will be comparatively better because we know that such good and free treatment as found in Malalai Hospital is unavailable in Afghanistan. Everyone of us prays and wishes to have Malalai Hospital in all provinces of Afghanistan." Sakina
- "…My 11 years old son was given a new life in Malalai Hospital. I called on my sister to come here to treat her child and herself…." Deeba
- "My wife and my child are getting treatment in Malalai Hospital. Through my wife, I was so impressed by the attitude of the people working in the hospital and its food which I don't know how to explain. Praise to every one of you, we are proud of RAWA." Karimullah.











The Malalai Hospital Quetta branch comprises only an outpatient department with two doctors, their assistants and one pharmacist on duty.

In order to give medical assistance to women and children in remote areas of Afghanistan and refugees in Pakistan, RAWA has established mobile health teams, which provide check-ups, treatment, and medicine to the people who otherwise would not receive them.




















RAWA'S AID TO TH





The domination of more than a decade of religious fascists and the deprivation of half of the population, of their basic rights led many women to poverty, beggary, prostitution, depression, suicide and self-immolation. 90% of the prostitutes are suffering from sexually transmitted diseases and numerous of them carry HIV. Under a brutal fundamentalist and male chauvinist rule, prostitutes are the most discarded, hated and forgotten souls. RAWA is the sole organization that despite untold difficulties has tried to reach them in order to rehabilitate, educate and treat them and their children. RAWA provides opportunities to a large number of widows, disabled women and needy families to help them stand on their own feet financially and rebuild their lives. These projects include centers for sewing, handicrafts, carpet weaving, embroidery, poultry, cow farms and other initiatives. These projects are always paired with literacy training so that women learn both short and long term skills.










RAWA


















RAWA

Rehabilitation Program for Prostitutes



MH (33 Years old): "During the regime of the Tliban, as there was no other way to make a living, I turned to prostitution. I was in contact with a Talib whose name was Sakhi Dad; he gave me ten lack (one lack=100,000 Afghanis, US$1=42,000 Afghanis) per week. However, six months ago, Sakhi Dad left Kabul and I am in great trouble. My only hope is to find a job. I regret being a prostitute but it was the hunger of my children that pushed me to this. My elder daughter is in the fourth class and I have tried hard to keep her ignorant of these facts. Because of my children I could not even commit suicide."



FA: She is a 35 year old widow with five children. She lost her husband in the war between the Taliban and the Wahdat Party in Dara-e-Suf.
"We came to Kabul. There was no other way to feed my five children except prostitution. My eleven-year old daughter knows about my contacts. I have arranged an engagement for her with a boy about whom I don't know much, so that she would not face what I am going through now. My husband's family is poor and can't help. I am shattered and very worried about the fate of my children."



FH: She says: "I am from Shamali. When the Taliban attacked our village, they destroyed everything. Everyone escaped to somewhere. The Taliban killed my father while he was working in the field. I moved to Kabul with my three children who are from three to seven years old. From that day my brother and husband are missing; perhaps they might be among the dead. In Kabul I was working as a servant in one of the houses from where I started prostituting. Nowadays I am in touch with a jeweler who gives me money when I visit him. I am suffering from stomach pain and do not like to have sexual relations with too many people."



SH: "I am from Panjsher valley but lived most of the time in Kabul. I had three children; two girls and one boy. I had a good life with my husband. But after seven years of togetherness my life took a new turn. Recently my two daughters died due to chickenpox. My husband blamed me for their death and used this as a pretext to leave me. He didn't take his son from me. I started this dirty business in the last few months.

I was living with my mother for some months but at last started begging. One day a shopkeeper made an offer and I accepted. Each week he gives me one and a half lack Afghanis. I don't know where he is from and whether he has a wife and children. I don't take any kind of pleasure in sexual relations with him, but it is forced on me. I used condoms to prevent getting pregnant, but in spite of that, I am four months pregnant now. My mother doesn't know any thing about my relationship with that man."



WH: “I am widowed and must feed my children. I started with cooking and washing clothes but our condition was very bad. At last I got in touch with a prostitute. She encouraged me to leave that hard job and do this business, which is full of money. My first reaction was to refuse, but later on, when our condition worsened, I accepted. When I did it for the first time, I felt very bad and cried for many days. I am in contact with a number of men who give me money. I always fear letting anyone, including my children and neighbors, know about my relations. If the neighbors find out they will throw me out of this area.
I am very afraid of getting AIDS or any other sexual disease; that is why I do this only in time of need.”



NH: About 35 years old, from Paghman Province the mother of six children; her older daughter is eleven years old. "I studied in school till the eighth class, but when I got married my husband did not allow me to study further. Two years after we got married my husband became addicted to drugs. He beat me daily and made life bitter for me. He wanted me to work and earn money to feed the children. When I was seven months pregnant he divorced me. I begged and washed clothes but that was not enough to fulfill our necessities. Nine months ago I turned to prostitution. I know that my life and my children's lives will be affected; if any one wants to help, I will leave this disgraced occupation without any hesitation.”



AH: “My husband divorced me five years ago. I gave birth to two daughters but he wanted a son. With two daughters I faced a lot of problems. I started with washing clothes but at the end fell into this net. I have been doing this for more than two years. I am in contact with a married man who has a showroom.

My older daughter is 14. In order to keep her safe from these things, I arranged her marriage. But because of bad luck, her life is bitterer than mine. Her husband is young and inexperienced and he and his mother do very cruel things to her. My daughter usually comes to share her pain with me.” AH is now a teacher in a RAWA literacy course.



RAWA regularly distributes food supplies among a number of prostitutes and beggars in Kabul.



RAWA literacy course for prostitutes

RAWA stretches its activities by taking part to reconstruct the "ground zero" of Afghanistan.



In 2002 RAWA was successful in repairing and cleaning three major water canals in Farah that will irrigate some 31,000 acres of land and help over 40,000 impoverished people to once again gain financial independence.





The three RAWA members, organizers of the project are talking with some of the villagers. One elder said: "Many thanks and gratitude to the brave women of RAWA and its longstanding support, for helping us to repair our water canals. We are very hardworking people and try to do everything on our own, but two decades of migration, repression and severe drought have left us with no resources."

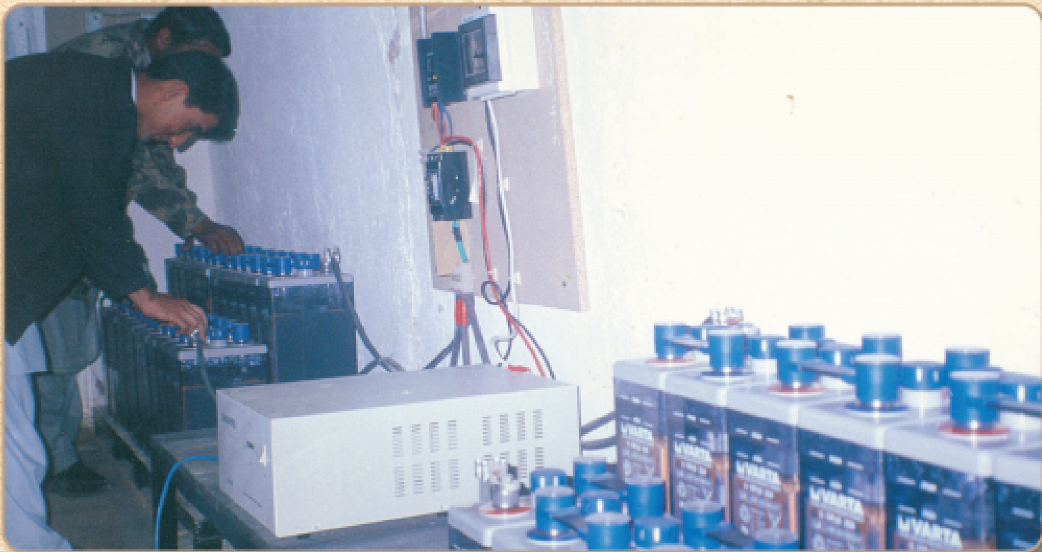




With the help of RAWA supporters from the Cayman Islands, RAWA is building a well-equipped school for girls in a remote village in Afghanistan.



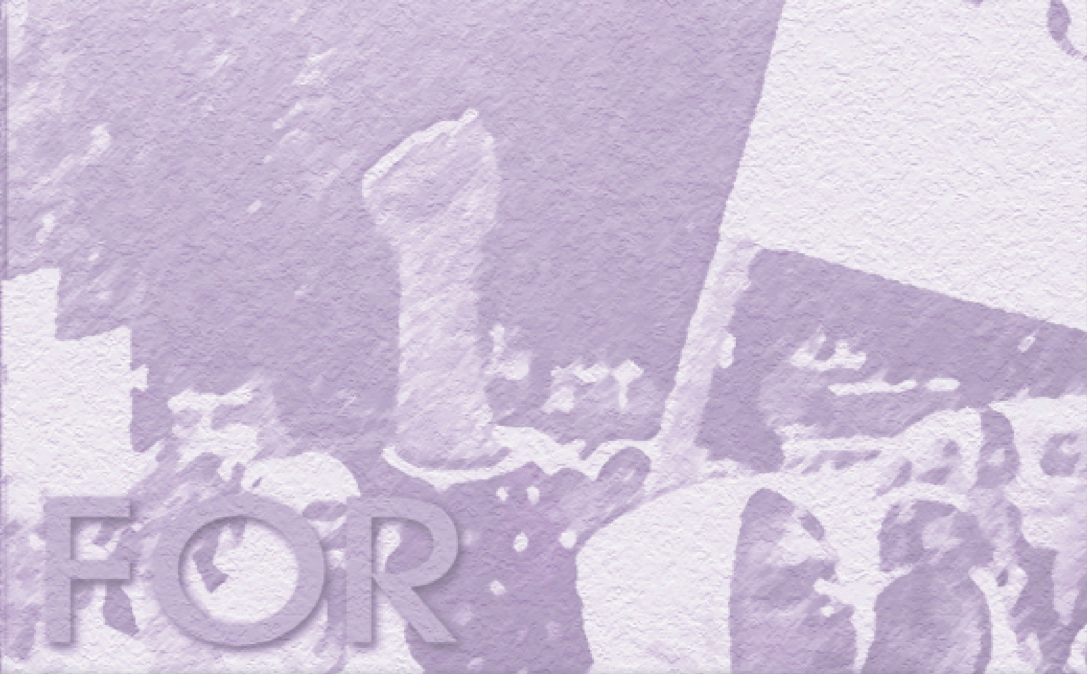
Work in progress to build a RAWA hospital in western Afghanistan that will provide free medical care for women and children.





With the help of Spanish supporters, RAWA established a solar energy project in a refugee camp in Pakistan to generate free electricity for a small community.

RAWA FOR FREEDOM



RAWA is the only Afghan feminist organization, which, in spite of numerous false accusations and many threats, has been fighting against fundamentalism and for democracy, freedom and women's rights.

Through political demonstrations and events to mark International Women's Day, martyrdom anniversary of our founding leader Meena on 4th of February, International Human Rights Day, the Black Day of 28 April when Jehadies took Kabul in 1992, and other occasions, RAWA has made the voice of Afghan women reach the international community.



RAWA demonstration in Rawalpindi, Dec. 27, 1988 against the Soviets and their puppet regime.







On Dec. 10, 2000, a group of Pakistani and Afghan Taliban attacked a RAWA rally in Islamabad and the Pakistani police resorted with teargas shelling and baton charging of RAWA activists. Some of our members and supporters were injured.



March 19, 2001 - Peshawar


March 8, 2000 - Peshawar



RAWA's anti-war demonstration in front of the UN main office in Islamabad to oppose military action against Iraq - Feb. 24, 2003





"Path of Light", an abstract theater piece performed at our Feb 4, 2003 function, Islamabad.



Sheema Kirmani a noted Pakistani classical dancer and women's rights activist performing a theatrical dance piece for RAWA, Peshawar - Feb. 4, 2002



Function to commemorate the 16th martyrdom anniversary of Meena, the founding leader of RAWA, Islamabad-Feb 4,2003

April 28 the day fundamentalists took power in Kabul, is the most odious day in our history. RAWA stages protest rallies every year on this black day.



April 28, 1998 - Peshawar



April 28, 2002 - Islamabad



Dec. 10, 2002 - Islamabad



April 28, 2003 - Islamabad



Meeting with German Foreign Minister,
Islamabad - October 2001



The selling of RAWA publications and handicrafts is an important financial source for the organization



RAWA in a meeting with Lakhdar Brahimi, Islamabad - Nov. 2001



A table of RAWA publications, awards and certificates, Feb 4,2003



Members of the Italian Parliament and RAWA supporters holding a press conference in solidarity with RAWA. March 11, 2002 - Islamabad



Press Conference in Peshawar, April 27, 2001



Luisa Morgantini (right) Italian member of European Parliament and Asma Jahangir (left) a well-known Pakistani Human Rights activist, in the press conference.



RAWA at a meeting with former King Zahir Shah in Kabul, May 19, 2002

One of RAWA's projects inside Afghanistan is to document the gross violations of human rights by the fundamentalists. Accepting enormous risk, our members have succeeded in documenting many such violations in video, photographs and reports.



RAWA footage of public executions by Taliban is the only available documentation of its kind of the atrocities committed by the Taliban.



Two Taliban beat a woman in public for removing her Burqa - August 26, 2001



A Taliban fighter parades the amputated limbs of Taliban victims through the streets of Kabul - Aug.14, 1998



Taliban reign of terror against Hazara minority in Herat - May 1999

Most of these photos were captured in video footage filmed by RAWA activists inside Afghanistan using hidden cameras.


Teachers and students protest against warlords in Takhar province - Oct.5, 2002


Massacre of Pakistani Taliban by the Northern Alliance in Mazar-e-Sharif - Nov.13, 2001


Taliban kill the prisoners of war and throw their dead bodies on the streets of Herat city - August 13, 2002.


Taliban hang two men in public in Kabul - September 23, 2000


A man hanged by Taliban in Kabul sports stadium.


Bomb blast in Jalalabad - April 8, 2002

At least 3,767 civilians were killed by US bombs between October 7 and December 10. That is an average of 62 innocent deaths a day - and an even higher figure than the 3,234 now thought to have been killed in New York and Washington on September 11.

The Guardian
Dec.20, 2001



14-years old boy from Agam district in Jalalabad, a victim of the US bombs in Jalalabad. Dec.3, 2001



Sole survivors of a family killed by US bombing, Jalalabad- Oct. 11, 2001



Dec.3, 2001: Niaz Mohammad from Agam district of Jalalabad says: "They are my nieces and nephews, their father was killed in the US bombardment, their mother is seriously wounded and she lost her both eyes and right now she is hospitalized. Many other members of their family were killed and they have nobody to take care of them so now they are with me in the hospital. All of them are wounded."



Jehadi (Northern Alliance) fundamentalists destroyed 80% of Kabul from 1992-96

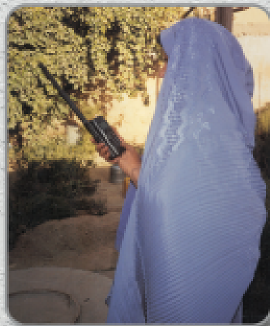


Kabul, 1993: Gunmen of Shura-e-Nezar, led by Ahmad Shah Masoud piled books before setting them ablaze in Kabul University. Hundreds of thousands of books from Kabul University and other libraries were burned by jehadis.



Like many other historical riches of Afghanistan, Dar-ul-Aman palace in Kabul was also completely destroyed during fundamentalists' infighting from 1992-96





Contributions by individuals and organizations such as V-Day provided us with satellite phones, camera and other accessories that enabled us to document human rights violations by the fundamentalists.



For over a decade, many have called Kabul the city of beggars. War and destitution have pushed many, particularly Afghan widows and orphans to the streets for beggary.



RAWA representatives have traveled abroad frequently, visiting many countries around the world in order to raise awareness about the real situation of Afghanistan in the clutches of Jehadi and Taliban fundamentalists, to establish solidarity with the people and justice-loving organizations of the world and ask for their material and moral support to our cause.



International Women's Day celebration, Australia - 2002



"Feminist Journey", Cordoba, Spain- December 2000



"Afghan Women's Summit for Democracy", Brussels - December 2001



United Nations Beijing Plus 5 - June 2000



"Religious Extremism". Morocco, January 2002



Congressional Briefing, Washington DC -June 2000



International Women's Day celebration, Chicago - 2002



A meeting in London- May 1998



Workshop in Bali, Indonesia-August 2002



Workshop in Thailand, October 1997



"World Court of Women Against War, For Peace", South Africa - March 2001.



Speaking tours and fundraising in Germany, November 2002



AIDWA All India Democratic Women's Association conference, India - November 2001.



During one-day public hearing on Afghanistan at the EU Parliament- November 2001



In UN Commission on Human Rights 52nd Session, Geneva - March & April 2001



With members of the Balearic Government, Spain- January 2001



In a school in Paris - March 03



With the delegates of an International conference in Colombo- May 2002



In a high school in Germany- June 2002



Speaking tour in Japan- December 2001



With Amnesty International in Switzerland- July 2002



In a press conference in Athens- January 2002



With the delegates of an international conference, Ottawa-October 2002



"World Social Forum" in Porto Alegre, Brazil- February 2002



RAWA demonstration in front of the White House, United States - April 28 2000



World's Women Forum, Valencia- October 2000



Speaking tours and fundraising in Italy- March 2003



RAWA benifit dance in BC Canada Nov. 2001







Fundraising and photo exhibition in Athens



Santa Barbara group of RAWA supporters has organized many events and fund-rising campaigns.





Memorial for Meena in front of the Afghan Embassy in Washington DC - February 4, 2002



RAWA photo exhibition at the International Center of Photography, New York City - September 2002



Funraising by RAWA supporters in Sydney, Australia - February 2, 2002



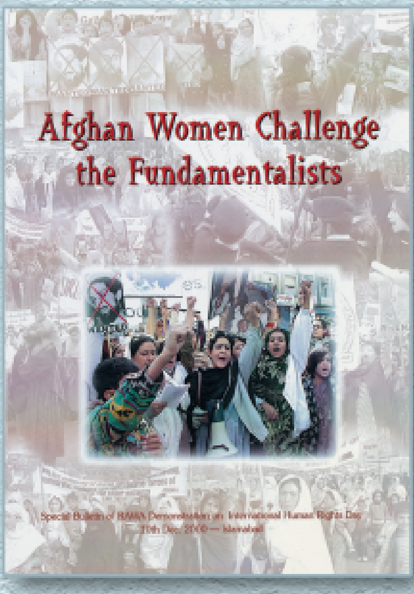
A show organized by The Multicultural Awareness Club in remembrance of Sep.11th in the US.



Event on Quadra Island, B.C., Canada - April 28, 2000

In addition to Payam-e-Zan (Women's Message), our oldest publication, which was first produced in Persian and Pushto in 1981, RAWA has published numerous booklets, brochures, posters and stickers in English, as well as audio cassettes and a CD of Freedom songs.

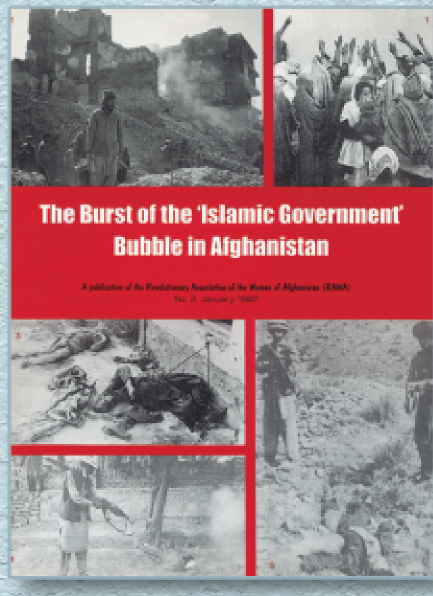
Among the pamphlets we have sold more than 20 thousand copies of "Afghanistan World's Largest Forgotten Tragedy" around the world.



72-page Special Bulletin of RAWA demonstration on International Human Rights Day - December 10, 2000



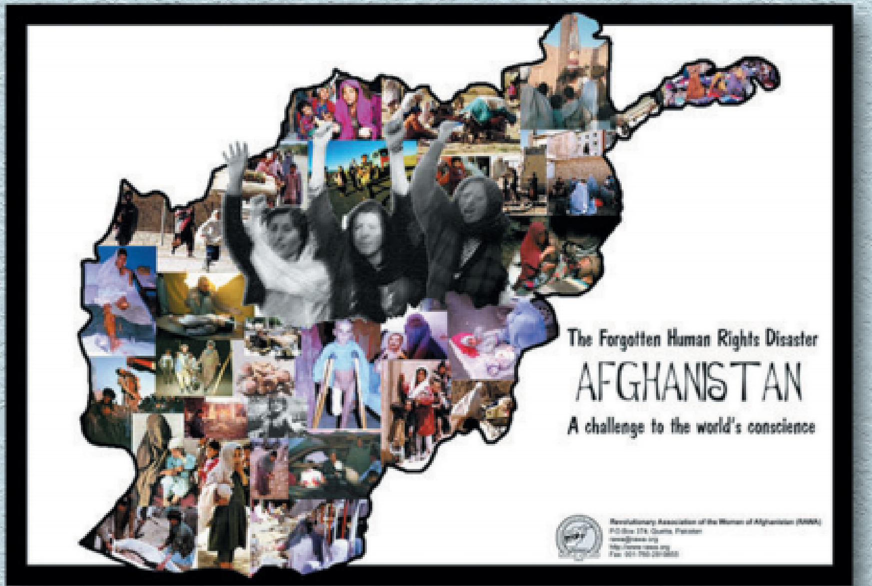
RAWA in the World Media in 384 pages



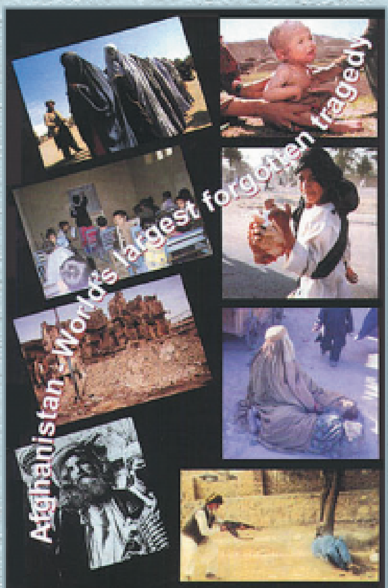
122-page magazine "The Burst of the 'Islamic Government' Bubble in Afghanistan"



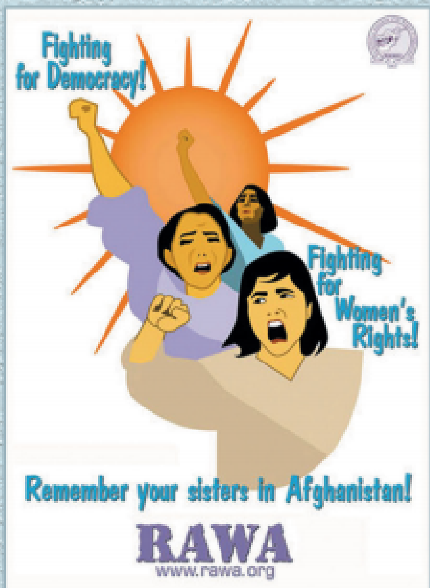
Payam-e-Zan in Persian/Pushto, No 55-56



22"x32" Colour poster on human rights disaster in Afghanistan



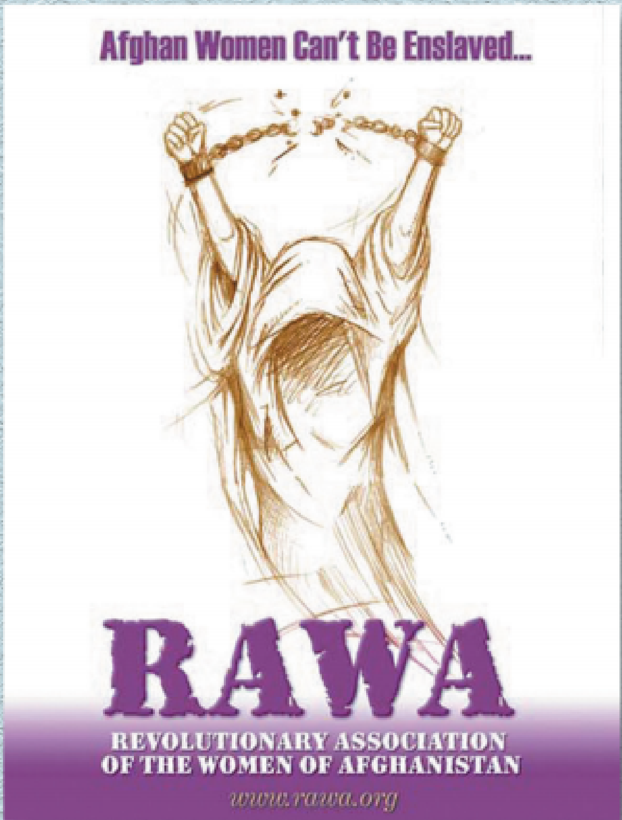
24-page informative full-colour booklet



A 12.5x8.5 cm sticker



Greeting Card



17"x23.5" poster "Afghan Women Can't Be Enslaved..."



Freedom: An audio CD of patriotic songs





2 out of 11 audio cassettes of patriotic songs produced by RAWA

Please support the cause of RAWA and all Afghan women by ordering copies of RAWA for sale/distribution to your friends and all who are interested in learning more about the plight of Afghan women.

Email us your mailing address and the number of copies you wish to purchase.



While the Taliban sought to take Afghanistan back centuries in time, RAWA, at nearly the same time, was moving technologically forward with one of its most important projects – the creation of RAWA's website. Web and email access gave RAWA nearly instantaneous contact with the rest of the world and enabled it to gain international recognition and support. Through the website, RAWA is able to broadcast the voices and standpoints of Afghan women, as well as images of war and violence-torn Afghanistan around the world and through the responses received RAWA gains the knowledge that it is not alone in its struggle.

Since the launching of the website in late 1996, RAWA has received millions of visits to the website, more than 20,000 have signed the guest book, and it has received and answered tens of thousands of e-mails. It is through the website and email that interested people and organizations often begin their relationship with RAWA and many go on to be involved supporters providing moral, material, financial, and political support.

Despite facing a siege-like atmosphere for most of our 26 years, RAWA has been nominated for and received numerous awards from freedom-loving organizations and institutions throughout the world.

These prizes are signs of the solidarity of organizations and women of the world with the freedom-loving Afghan women. We hope that the great solidarity that binds us together will only become stronger and wider in the future.



Glamour 2001 Women of the Year award presented by Ms. Mavis Leno- October 2001, New York City



“The French Republic's Liberty, Equality, Fraternity Human Rights Prize" endowed by the Prime Minister of the French Government through the National Advisory Commission on Human Rights was granted to RAWA for its human rights activities in Afghanistan- April 2000, Islamabad

Some RAWA Awards



A gift from Amnesty International to RAWA



The Sixth Asian Human Rights Award presented to the RAWA, Tokyo - December 2001



Isimbardi Award presented to RAWA by Ms Ombretta Colli president of Milan Province of Italy. A gold medal and certificate of honor was given to a RAWA activist - November 2001, Milan



RAWA was one of the winners of the 2001 SAIS-Novartis International Journalism Grand Prize for its video contribution to the documentary "Beneath the Veil" - April 2002, Washington, DC



"Mona Lisa Award - Women of the Year 2001 Award"
from ZDF TV - November 2001, Berlin



Certificate of Honor issued by the Board of Supervisors, City and County of San Francisco- November 2002, San Francisco, CA



University of Antwerp (Belgium) awarded RAWA an Honorary PhD for outstanding non-academic achievements. May 16, 2003

RAWA in the WORLD MEDIA

RAWA demands that both the Taliban and the Northern Alliance be disarmed, calling both sides violent, brutally misogynistic, and anti-democratic. RAWA members, active for two decades, have risked their lives providing secret education for Afghani girls, providing medical aid for Afghani women, and documenting the Taliban's atrocities.

"The example set by RAWA should be the foundation of a humane solution to the international crisis" said Tod Sloan, social psychologist and co-chair of the International Committee of the US Green Party.

Common Dreams News Center,
25 October 2001

The women of RAWA have set an example for all people, even under the most difficult of circumstances have they worked towards for women's rights in Afghanistan and against violence.

Conny Hermann, editor of "ML Mona Lisa"
AP, 24 November 2001

RAWA's members are still agitating for women's equality and a secular government, and they are also passionately involved in rebuilding civil society. In contrast to some of the rather chaotic government and non-governmental projects, the couple of RAWA schemes I see, in Sarasia and Kabul, are models of good organisation and sustainability.

Natasha Walter, The Guardian
20 July 2002

In Pakistan the group mainly emphasises on health care and education. Even here, however, they are forced to operate secretly most of the time since Pakistan's North West Frontier Province is also in the clutches of fundamentalists.

Aditi Bhaduri,The Statesman (India)
25 November 2001

The exemplary courage displayed by the (RAWA) in undertaking such documentation has no parallel in recent history. Armed with hidden cameras, these women have done more to expose the murderous excesses of the Taliban regime than all the international human rights agencies put together.

Editorial-The Times of India
29 October 2001

Since then (Meena's assassination), numerous members have been injured during peaceful protests. But the most ominous reminder of their grave task is a 1996 fatwah levied against the group by the ruling Taliban, which threatens any member captured with instant execution.

Matt Bean, Court TV
27 September 2001

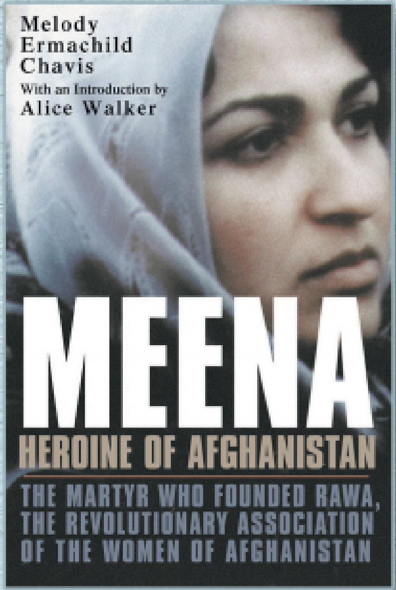
West continues to support warlords who flagrantly abuse women's rights. And, incomprehensibly, there has been no help at all given by any government to the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), the only Afghan organisation calling for a secular state and women's equality. The argument for this lack of support is that Rawa's vision is too radical for an Islamic culture – and yet it is born out of the resilience and intelligence of Afghan women themselves.

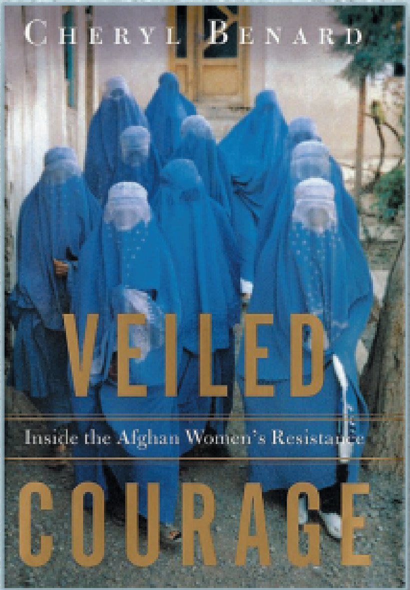
Natasha Walter, The Independent
5 September 2002

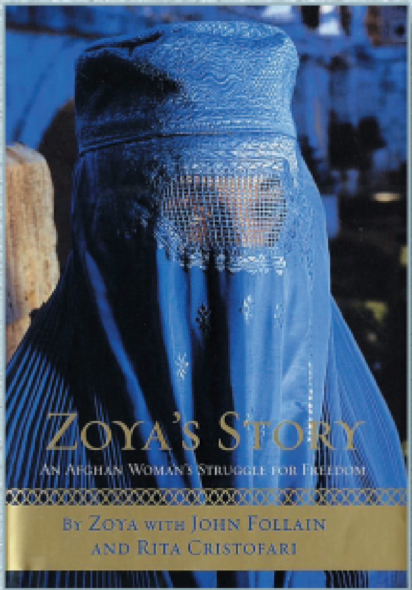
"There are a lot of people who say all kinds of false things about RAWA -- that they are Maoists, they are communists. They are very militant, they are very pure. They are very radical. And I'm very drawn to that. People call them uncompromising, and they are right. But bravo! I feel a kindred spirit."

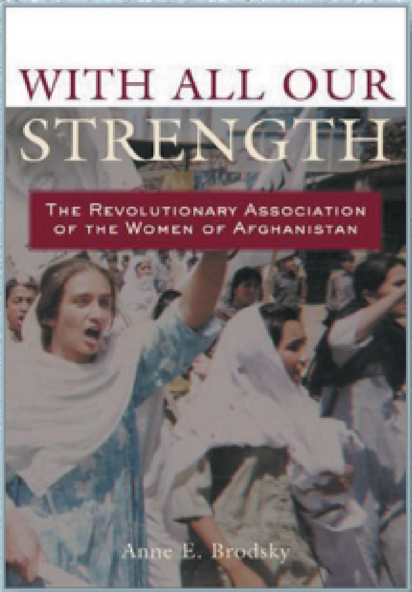
Eve Ensler, Salon.com
26 November 2001

In addition to the work of journalists on assignment, some wonderful books, films, and exhibitions of photography and art work have been produced by our supporters, documenting RAWA's history and activities and in particular the life of Meena. They have contributed greatly to the struggle of Afghan women and we would like to thank them wholeheartedly for their invaluable help. You can order any of these documents through our website.









Revolutionary

What an indictment of our world
that love of freedom
and the desire of escape
from oppression and hate
has to be called "Revolutionary."

. . . .

This then is the reason
for revolution. We need revolutions
in hearts and minds and souls.
We need a revolution inside
Mother Earth herself, alive
with eternal love and respect
and sacred duty to each other:
she will give birth
to our ever-growing, ever-shining
redeemed and hopeful future.
It is a revolution
against the horrors of death itself.

By Thomas Fortenberry, dedicated to RAWA

